



Nelson County Justice Center

Bardstown, Kentucky



BUILDING FRONT FACADE

Welcome to Nelson County Justice Center

Sited in one of the state's most historic counties, the Nelson County Justice Center challenged the design team to create a facility appropriate for this environment. Obtaining community support for the Justice Center, located just outside downtown, was critical. The previous, historically iconic courthouse has stood at the heart of the community since 1891.

The new facility replaces a dilapidated shopping center. The design focused on developing the site as a "Southern Plantation" and the Justice Center as the "House Proper," the centerpiece of a vista framed by a tree-lined boulevard. Visitors are welcomed into the building by a monumental staircase and porch, as well as symmetrical arcing ramps that embrace the entrance in plan.



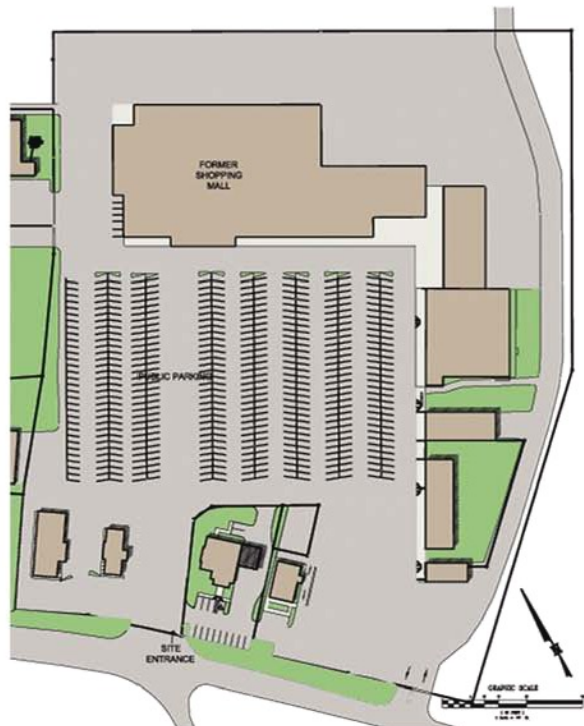
The Existing Courthouse was built in 1891-92 in the Richardsonian Romanesque style that was popular at the time.

It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing property of a historic district.

The historic courthouse is the centerpiece of downtown Bardstown. It was a challenge to relocate judicial functions off site successfully and sensitively.



EXISTING COURTHOUSE FRONT ELEVATION



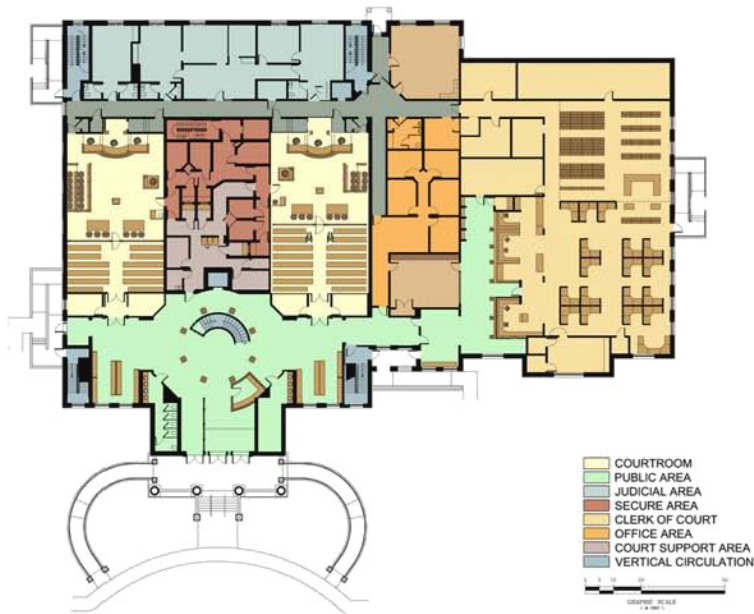
EXISTING SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN



NEW COURTHOUSE LOCATION



EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN





SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN



ROTUNDA & CUPOLA SECTION



BALUSTRADE



PEDIMENT AND FRIEZE



CIRCUIT CLERK LOBBY EXTERIOR



CUPOLA WITH ORIGINAL WEATHERVANE



The psychological impact for those visiting the Justice Facility was crucial to the design of the building interior. Natural light floods the central rotunda, providing the public with a clear point of reference from all public spaces. Extensive use and ergonomic detailing of “touchable” materials, such as wood and granite, create a sense of warmth and home. The public spaces are comforting and calming in order to reduce the stress of participating in court proceedings.

The facility is sited so that a matching wing can be constructed as growth and programming require. The building itself is designed to be expanded with minimal impact to the main structure.

Upon its completion, city officials, county officials, and most importantly, the community have openly embraced this new iconic Justice Center. The project has sparked a wave of rehabilitation and redevelopment of numerous surrounding businesses and neighborhoods.



EXTERIOR HAND AND GUARDRAIL



COLUMN BASE WITH RAILING TRANSITION



BALUSTRADE



MAIN ROTUNDA STAIR



MONUMENTAL STAIR



CIRCUIT COURT CLERK COUNTER



CIRCUIT COURT ENTRY



The courtrooms and office areas are equipped with access floor systems to accommodate future changes in use and technology. The witness stand, lectern, and litigation tables are mobile, allowing each of the courtrooms to accommodate a wide variety of trial cases.

In order to create a more environmentally responsible facility, the Justice Center utilizes a geothermal heating and cooling system. The well field is located beneath a parking area adjacent to the building, allowing any maintenance or future expansion to be accommodated with virtually no impact to the building itself.

Designed not only with its environment in mind, the facility addresses heightened security concerns. The design accomplishes an efficient separation of spaces and circulation paths for the public, judicial staff, courthouse employees and prisoners. The public is screened from all prisoner transportation and handling. Trial witnesses are provided secure private areas. Justices and employees are able to move through the facility without ever having to breach security. Despite these numerous separate accommodations, community interaction is preserved and encouraged.



OCULUS IN ROTUNDA



CIRCUIT COURTROOM



RAIL IN COURTROOMS

Project Data:

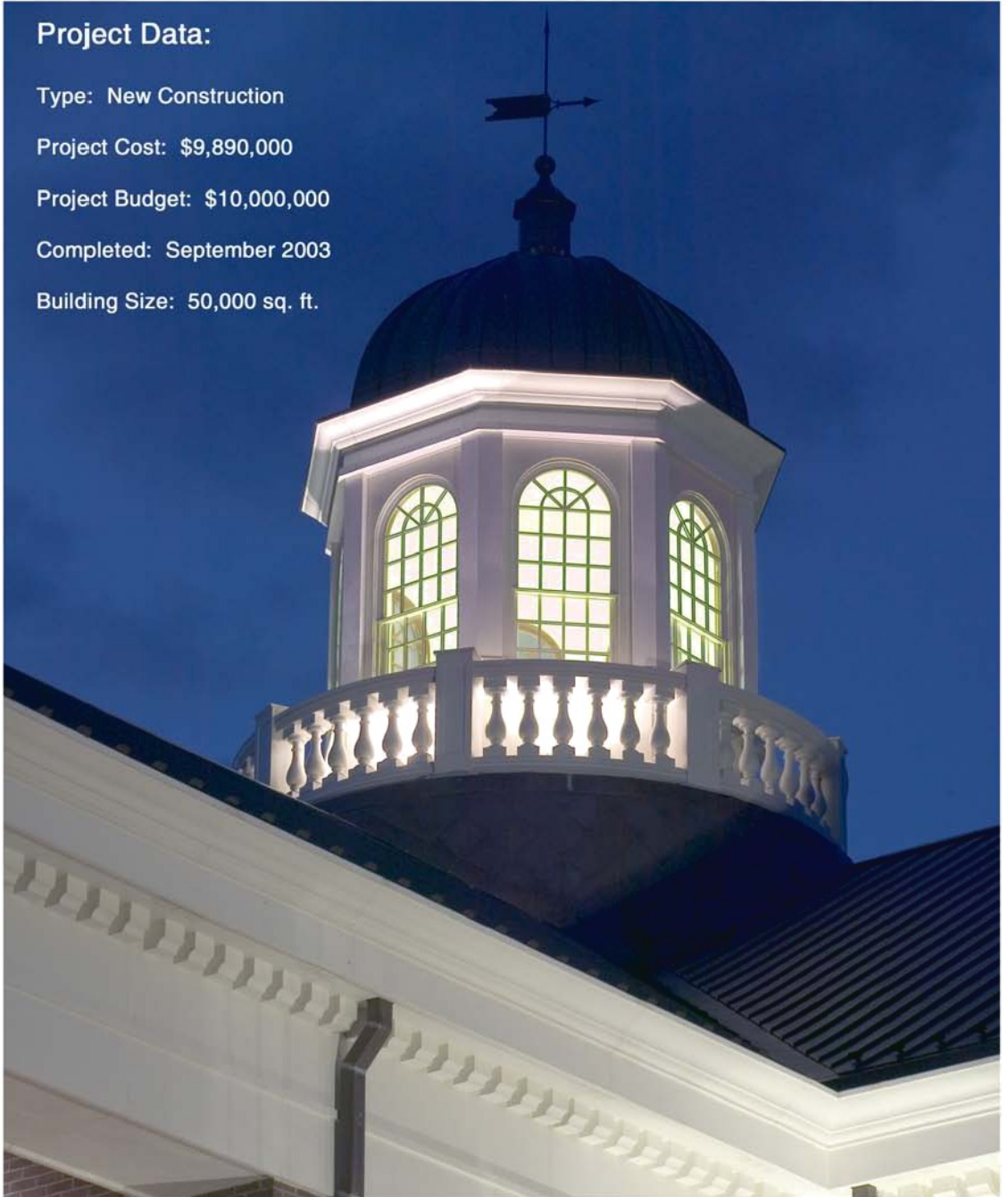
Type: New Construction

Project Cost: \$9,890,000

Project Budget: \$10,000,000

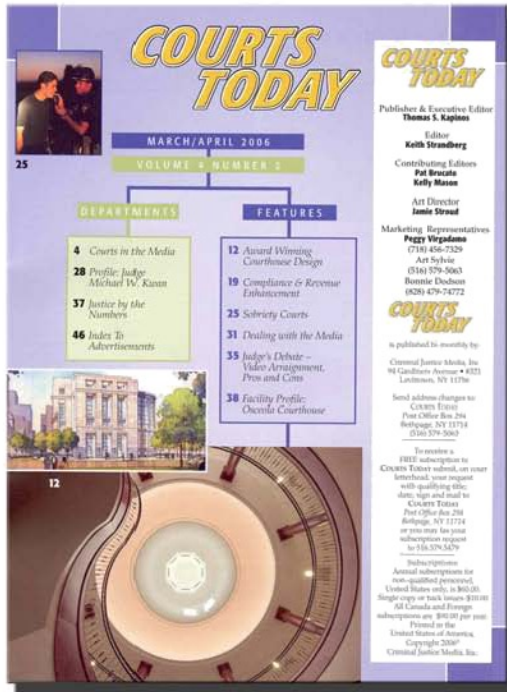
Completed: September 2003

Building Size: 50,000 sq. ft.

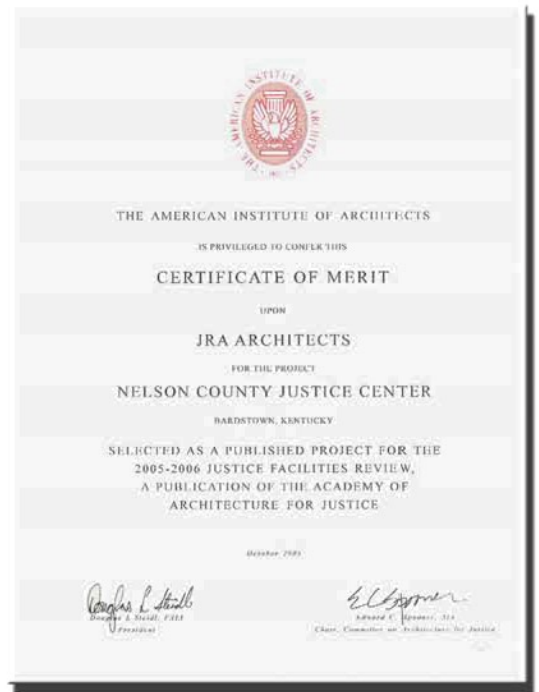


"Across this state, we have moved to renovate and construct new court facilities to serve the needs of our citizens...There is no better example of this than the Nelson County Justice Center."

Supreme Court Chief Justice
Joseph Lambert



Featured in
Courts Today magazine
March/April 2005 Issue



Recipient of the
2005-2006 AIA Justice Facilities Review
Certificate of Merit

"The Nelson County Courthouse has historically played a special role in the lives of real citizens. This new facility was built to anticipate the future needs of our court system and is something we can be proud of for generations to come."

Nelson County Judge/Executive
Dean Watts



730 West Main Street, Suite 120
Louisville, Kentucky 40202
502.583.4697